Significance of Professional Development of School Principals: Evidence from Literature Review

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to systematically review the literature on the professional development of school leaders in the world with empirical and theoretical evidence related to school leaders, educational administrators, and school principals in several countries. Interpretative analysis on literature covering professional development, pre-service training, in-service training programs, mentoring, models of school leaders, coaching, history of education in Sri Lanka, and the background information of Education Administrative Service in Sri Lanka is carried out. Training and professional development date back to several centuries and it was found that the influence of imperialists mainly by the British is dominant in Sri Lankan education and professional development programs. Sri Lanka continues to implement training and development with the least changes in contents and scopes compared to the past. It was further found that authorities paid little attention to the effectiveness of the training and development but rather were concerned about the compliance requirement. At present, school leaders undergo training programs, and improvements in leaders are also seen at varying degrees. The study finds that School leaders who are good at leadership skills and

competencies produce better results in terms of both students' performances and school management. However, the use of technology in training was trivial but the need for more sophisticated, comprehensive, and sustainable training for school leaders for better performance is highlighted. Provision of training and development is perceived by authorities as a practice and not as a key driver of improving school performance and effective management. The outcome of the study can be used to further enhance and implement professional development and training programs for school leaders with an outcome-oriented approach. Therefore, findings will help lay a foundation for policymaking and implementation can be broadened to enhance the quality of education in Sri Lanka.

Introduction

Education is one of the important drivers of development in any country. The roles of leaders greatly contribute to education and school education, the largest sector in education is mainly administered by officials in Sri Lanka Education Administrative Service (SLEAS). School principals of National Schools in Sri Lanka are SLEAS officers. It is a fact that professionally developed, multi-skilled, and trained principals always manage their schools successfully and show better performance compared to their schools.

Hence this study aims to identify salient features of professionalism-embedded leaders in the government school education system who are Sri Lanka Education Administrative Officers and what causes and effects professionalism visible in education officers working in the western province of Sri Lanka. This objective is going to be achieved through a literature review of professional development, pre-service training, in-service training programs, mentoring. coaching around the world, history of education in Sri Lanka, and the background information of Sri Lanka Education Administrative service in Sri Lanka.

Literature Review
Needfulness of professional development

Hellinger, (2005) and Drew, (2009) indicated that the role and expectations of school leaders have significantly changed in the recent past. School leaders and principals are normally held responsible for the academic performance of their students (Busch, O'Brien & Spangler, 2005). Early stages of education training development mainly focused on knowledge expansion. However, at present, it is believed that the competency and skill development of participants are keys to success. Further, the development of technology also has changed the landscape of professional development in education around the world.

Both training providers and trainees have realized the importance of quality of professional development in education. Accordingly, training and development Programmes take into account the goals of schools to be seen in the future (Grogan & Andrews, 2002). De Vita (2005) stresses that school principals need to improve teaching and learning in today's schools and those of the future as well.

Davies (2006) highlighted that formal organizational networks and personal professional networks as good sources of professional learning for principals and education administrators to help develop the strategic capacity of school leaders. Council of Chief State of School Officers (2008) mentions that the participation of school leaders in effective professional development programs is vital for the development of the best quality instructional leaders. Hence, it is the responsibility of higher education authorities is to prepare plans and provide professional development opportunities to school leaders for the development of school education.

The scholars and researchers have specified that school leadership, principalship, instructional leadership influence student success of schools more than any other single factor (Darling-Hammond, et al., 2009; National Association of Elementary School Principals, 2013). It has been found that there is a direct relationship between the professional development of principals, school leaders, and school administrators and the student performance of schools.

History of education administration in Sri Lanka

Before the colonial period, Sri Lanka had a temple-based Buddhist religion dominated education system. With the arrival of colonial agents, the traditional school education system in Sri Lanka was changed. As the first colonial agent, the Portuguese who arrived in 1505 ruled the country for about 150 years. Subsequently, the Dutch defeated the Portuguese and captured the country. After another 150 years, the British took the power of the country from the Dutch and ruled the country until 1948.

During the period of Portuguese, the 'school' concept was established for the first time in Sri Lanka by disregarding the traditional education system that the country has inherited. They introduced 'Parish School'. The school system which is being implemented at present had been introduced during the period of 'colony' in Sri Lanka. Since then, the school system has been functioning with changes over time. The western model of schools became much popular in the country later on. (Ruberu, 1962, 2003; Ruberu, 1962). A very significant contribution was made towards school education and university education by the British in Sri Lanka from 1796 to 1948. School curriculum, the structure of the school system, school management systems, university system were the major changes introduced by the British and Sri Lanka continues with them.

However, significant changes had been made in the school management sector after independence in 1948. The introduction of 'Central Schools' and free education from Kindergarten to the University in 1947 were key changes. Subsequent changes namely taking over of denominational school were taken over, and establishing a national system of education in 1961, special education reforms implemented in 1972, the introduction of a white paper on education in 1985, the establishment of the National Institute of Education (NIESL) in 1981, the establishment of National Colleges of Education (NCoE) in 1986, devolution of power to provincial councils in 1987, the establishment of National Education Commission (NECSL) in 1991 and introduction of ESDFP educational reforms in 2006 (Colenso, 2005) can be identified as major changes.

After independence, the government was in a process of decentralization, where some layers between the central ministry and the schools were established to bridge the gap (Perera, 2006). However, many stakeholders of schools believed decentralization as a theoretical concept than a functional one. Barriers to the bureaucracy of the government organizational structures and traditional views of the people slowed down the positive changes of the government towards school education in Sri Lanka (Perera, 1997).

In 1981, "School Cluster System" was introduced with a view to up-grade marginalized, neglected, underdeveloped, rural, and small schools by making them engage in cluster activities; to achieve qualitative development in education through rigorous and efficient supervision, observation, evaluation, and follow-up action of the schools within the cluster; to minimize duplication in the provision and use of facilities and to achieve optimum utilization of scarce human and other resources within school clusters; to get active participation of the internal and external community in school management.

The 13th amendment to the constitution of Sri Lanka in 1987 expanded the process of decentralization of school education in the country. Accordingly, the responsibilities of school education were decentralized to the provincial level. As a result, nine provincial ministries of education were established to perform new roles delegated them (Hubbell, 1987; Shastri, 1992).

The next big change is the implementation of the Education Sector Development Framework Policy (ESDFP) for primary and secondary education starting from the period 2006-2010. The Programme for School Improvement is

one of the central elements of the ESDFP which was supported by the World Bank financing. This official decentralization of the school management system in 2006 was named School Base Management (SBM) along with Programme for School Improvement (PSI). This system continues to operate in all the schools as a management model. This system is handled by mainly SLEAS officers in the capacities of principals, deputy principals, directors, subject directors, commissioners, and other officials.

The Sri Lanka Education Administrative Service (SLEAS)

The constitution of SLEAS was published in 1986 through a gazette notification. Since then, most of the managerial positions of the school education sector are held by SLEAS officers. For the establishment of the service, a service minute of the Sri Lanka Education Administrative Service was published in an Extraordinary Gazette in 2002. Accordingly, SLEAS members are appointed to the school service under four categories as Grade III, Grade II, Grade I, and Special Grade. The key roles of those officers as stipulated in the service minute are assisting in the formulation of national education policies encompassing the general education towards the overall human resource development in Sri Lanka and the implementation, direction, regulation, and evaluation of such policies and the establishment of the interrelationship between secondary education and post-secondary education contributing towards the learning and teaching process and the management and supervision of all institutes in the education system by ensuring the quality improvement of the education.

SALES officers are recruited by the Ministry of Education through a competitive examination followed by an interview. Competitive examination for recruitment SLEAS officials covers comprehension, Intelligence Test, General Knowledge, Essay and Precis writing, Comparative Education, and Case Study on Education Management. Newly recruited SLEAS officers are provided a pre-service induction training by an organization selected by the Secretary of the Ministry of Education. Besides, each SLEAS officer is required to follow capacity building training courses related to Sri Lanka Education Administrative Service and conducted by the National Institute of Education or by an institute recognized by the Ministry of Education. The key areas covered in such programs include General Policies of Education, International Trends on Education, Education Management and Elements of Leadership and Subjective Study, Elements of Productivity Improvement in Institutes of Education and Subjective Study, Preparation of project proposals on Education.

Class II Sri Lanka Education Administrative Service officers are also required to compile a capacity building training course in Education Management and Administration covering Human and Physical Resource Management in the Education System, Procurement Management and Technical valuations, Case Study on Audits and Discipline in the Institutes of Education, Preparation of Analytical Explanatory Reports on Education Research, Projects and Programmes, Curricular Development. Similarly, the subject area covered in Capacity-building training courses for Class I official include Education Management and Administration, Analysis of Education Policies, Education Standards, Education Research, Advanced Skills of Information and Communication Technology, Teacher Education, Curricular Development. All the courses are conducted either by the National Institute of Education or an institute recognized by the Ministry of Education (Gazette extraordinary in Sri Lanka, 2002). In addition to the above training and capacity development programs, LEAS officers, are occasionally provided some of the foreign and local training and development opportunities as well.

Needfulness of professional development programs

Mestry (2017) mentioned that principals were found to have experienced great difficulties in coping with numerous changes, due to inadequate leadership preparation, lack of the necessary skills, knowledge, and attitudes to lead and manage schools effectively and efficiently. Literature finds that many countries have commenced wide-ranged reforms with the intention of better preparing principals for the educational demands of life and work in the 21st century (Bush, 2005; Russell & Cranston, 2012).

Department of Education in South Africa (1996) introduced a new system of governance in schools but have principals were not appropriate preparation for the change to carry out the new role as 'chief executive officers' (Department of Education, 1996:18). Starr (2009:1), mentioned that the roles of the principal are now similar to that of a chief executive officer (CEO) of a corporate organization, who is responsible for strategic planning, budgets, managing industrial relations, procuring resources, and facilitating marketing and public relations.

Lack of relevant knowledge of school administrators
Literature finds that many principals lacked the relevant knowledge and skills to lead their schools effectively (Mestry & Singh, 2007), and this situation leads to serious negative implications. It is clear that there a dire need for education authorities to continually develop and support principals and enable them to lead schools effectively. Mestry (2017) highlighted the importance of professional development systems in countries transforming, as well as those with scarce resources and a high-level need, as change should be managed carefully for organizational effectiveness (Mestry, 2017: 2).

Tsukuba and Taylor, (1995, cited in Bush & Oduro, 2006:362) indicated that the principals are appointed without proper training, and due to such situation schools faced many challenges. They identified that headteachers come to headship without being prepared to accept the responsibilities of the new role. Hence, they often happen to rely on experience and common sense when decisions are taken. They further indicated the importance of leadership and management development of principals (Bush & Oduro, 2006; Mestry & Singh, 2007)

Goslin (2009) found that principals tend to overlook their responsibilities of curriculum or instructional leadership, since they are not entirely aware of their key tasks, or they are too busy attending to their managerial responsibilities, and either resolving conflicts among stakeholders or maintaining student discipline. This highlights the importance of empowering principals and preparing them professional competencies and skills to function as CEOs of schools and to continually engage in professional development activities to gain required skills, knowledge, attributes, awareness on management and administration of school and competencies (Goslin, 2009).

Professional development opportunities
It is commonly acknowledged that education administrators, education officers, and school principals need continuous professional development opportunities to ensure school improvement and student success (Daresh, 1998; Evans & Mohr, 1999; Thody, 1998). Nelson & Sassi (2005) have indicated that it is possible to develop leadership practices that affect student achievement through professional development programs of school leaders. Zepeda (2008) identified professional development as a part of the support system designed for educational administrators, teachers, and students to contribute to school development. Glickman, Gordon & Ross- Gordon (2007) mentioned that professional development is an ongoing process designed to train educational administrators to enhance the quality of education. Bellibas (2014); Hallinger, Bickman & Davis (1996) indicated that gender and school level are significant predictors of principals' supposed instructional leadership, female principals and those working at high schools are more likely to engage in instructional leadership practices. Hallinger, Bickman, and Davis (1996) further found that female principals are more involved in instructional leadership practices compared to male principals. Leithwood, Begley, and Cousins (1990) stated that gender-related socialization experiences also seemed to contribute to a comparatively big percentage of women are working as curriculum and instructional leaders; a fairly higher percentage of men, in contrast, works as general manager.

Professional development of education administrators in different countries
International Programme for School Principals (IPSP) provided by the National College in England has been identified as a modular course in leadership and it is used around the world to provide professional development training for school principals. National College in England offers such programs with high-quality training and

accreditation. This program runs for two weeks as residential training. Participants take part in day-long seminars and tutor-led presentations with evening extension activities, personal studies using a range of internationally recognized leadership materials. Also, participants spend two days in English schools, meeting high-performing senior leaders (Caldwell et. al., 2003; Finnish National Board of Education,2012) to develop their professional capacities.

It was found that pre-service training programs for the education officers in a different manner, as a mandatory activity, are conducted by many countries. This program usually commences before the responsibilities of the positions are assumed. This procedure is used in Germany, France, China (Shanghai), and South Korea, where principal training starts with induction training. In France, however, the regional school administration organizes a brief government-funded voluntary preparation course for the recruitment test, and those passing the test gain entry to a career as a principal, which starts with induction training. Countries where eligibility as a principal requires participation in pre-service training (completing or starting a qualification program). This procedure is in place in Scotland, Australia (Victoria), Canada (Ontario), as well as the United States (New York, California) and Russia (St. Petersburg). In this situation, compulsory pre-service training for SLEAS officers can appear for several years in Sri Lanka also. The SLEAS officers recruited through an open competitive examination will be provided 12 months of induction training. The newly recruited SLEAS officers, who recruited through a limited competitive examination will be provided 03 months of pre-service training, and the pre-service training for the SLEAS officers recruited on service experience and merit will be 02 months. This induction training program is officially offered by the Sri Lanka Institute of Development Administration under instructions and supervision of the Ministry of Education (Gazette extraordinary in Sri Lanka, 2002).

Many developed countries, as well as developing countries, have placed CPD for education officers and school leaders on education development and staff development. In the United Kingdom (UK), for example, the challenge of training and professional development of school and education leaders has been given the highest priority of any education aim. In the United States of America (US), CPD programs are usually offered by external agencies. For example, the Wallace Foundation, a national philanthropy organization based in New York City provides, among other, school leadership training for headteachers/ principals, school leaders. The Canadian government, using the Energizing Ontario Education model of improving education through more effective school leaders, developed a coherent leadership strategy to provide adequate contextual support for school leaders (OECD, 2010; Schleicher, 2012: 3).

Singapore carries out training for successful potential school managers and leaders upon selection to attend leadership programs at Singapore's National Institute for Education, based on interviews and leadership-situation exercises (OECD, 2010; Schleicher, 2012: 3).

Professional development programs for school leaders
It appears that the school leadership preparation programs generally address issues such as management of human and financial resources of schools, school leadership orientations, school laws, curriculum development, and planning at the school level, problem-solving skills, school-based decision making, application of Information, and Communication Technology in schools, school-family partnership, learning and program evaluations (Beyer, 2009). In many countries, schools, leadership training programs are organized differently. In Finland, school leadership programs are categorized: principal preparation or qualification programs, specialist qualification in management programs, professional development (PD) programs, advanced studies in universities, and other courses and studies (Varri & Alava, 2005).

School leaders, principal preparation, and training programs should be guaranteed constant valuation of competences of aspiring principals to improve student learning are important. Orr & Orphanos (2011); Bottoms, O'Neill, Fry & Hill (2003) have identified several key/ fundamental characteristics of school leadership training programs as effective principal training program should have well-defined leadership theory, a comprehensible

curriculum that should be integrated with an effective pedagogy, school improvement, change management, etc. Principal training programs should employ an active learning strategy that merges theory, practice, and encourage positive reflection. The programs must provide both social and professional support. The criteria and strategies should be applied to choose high-quality candidates and people with adequate knowledge of curriculum and instruction with a passion especially, to improve student learning (Orr, 2010). For example, Orr and Barber (2006) indicate that some effective principal training program structures, complete and standardized curriculum, and more rigorous internships highly influence different types of expected outcomes.

In France, those who are admitted through the spring entrance examination are immediately appointed to positions at the beginning of the following school year. The nature of the pre-service training in France appears that every new principal is allocated a training tutor, who is a more experienced and qualified principal selected from another school. Training provided was found to be supervised by a team comprising the head of the school and the administrative and pedagogical inspectors. Throughout the induction stage, each new principal is provided with a tutor appointed by the school administrative authority, who works at a different school than the inductee. The tutor's role is to meet the trainee frequently and monitor the progress of his or her induction into the occupation (Hargreaves et.al., 2007; Peterson, 2002; Caldwell et. al., 2003; Finnish National Board of Education, 2012) to provide different aspects of learning experiences.

The German state of Baden-Württemberg provides a three-week continuing education training course for those appointed as school principals. In the first week, the introduction is held during the school holidays. In the second and third week, assessment and guidance take place during school days by covering human resource development, quality management, and teamwork. Courses are provided free of charge and funded by the State Ministry of Education (Hale & Moorman, 2003; Hall, 2008; Hargreaves et.al., 2007; Finnish National Board of Education, 2012).

Scotland's new headteachers (principals) are provided an induction training which includes a short, half-or one-day program with themes mostly related to the work and the working environment as well as competence development opportunities. A new headteacher is assigned a mentor at the school. If the principal has not completed qualification training previously when working as a teacher or deputy headteacher, it is possible to complete it after being appointed as a headteacher. However, the Netherlands does not seem to have a consistent or even common practice for the induction of new principals (Finnish National Board of Education, 2012).

New Zealand, the University of Auckland carries the First Time Principals training program to induct newly appointed principals. The main objective of this induction training program is to develop principals' knowledge, skills, and capabilities to support their successful school leadership. This program is conducted free of charge every year and travel expenses, accommodation, meals, and resources are provided for free. This principal induction training program contains several components. For instance: three days two residential courses take place in holidays; a mentoring program, with two school-based visits, participation in three professional learning groups and online community-based activity, and telephone support; formative evaluations and self-assessments completed by the participant principals to inform the continuous improvement of the program; and locally-based programs in covering aspects such as financial management and property controlling and resource management (Hargreaves et.al., 2007; Peterson, 2002; Caldwell et. al., 2003; Finnish National Board of Education, 2012).

The Executive Board for Education and Training in Norway organizes the government-funded National Programme for new Principals. This training program is mainly projected for newly appointed principals, but other principals also can apply if there are seats available. These induction training programs play a vital and continuing role in Finnish principal training. The national training program for principals has contributed to the achievement of national education policy objectives, implementation of significant reform projects, and national networking of principals.

Professional development methods

Mentoring

Mentorship programs have also become very demanding in principals, school administrators', school leaders' professional development (Daresh, 2004). By stressing the importance of "principals', school administrators', school leaders' learning", mentorship is thought to provide a variety of experiences and enhance their job satisfaction, motivation, and leadership, capacity development (Lovely, 1999). Lindley (2009) shows that one of the most vital responsibilities of the mentor is to provide direction, instruction, guidance for mentees in managing and leading the school and staff to achieve school aims, targets, and objectives. As indicated by Fenwick and Pierce (2002) individualized learning is effective professional development for school leaders, administrators, managers, and also principals. The reflective inquiry approach to professional development is important to help principals' ability to form knowledge by using research activities and serving them to their learning (Fenwick and Pierce 2002).

Very effective mentor affairs are made on a basis of mutual trust, admiration, and relationship to offer an appropriate, tailored experience for a newly recruited principal or a newly joined school administrator. By demonstrating problem-solving methods and coaching the newly joined principal or administrator through decision-making processes, a mentor provides assistance to develop the required skills, attitudes, values, knowledge, etc. of the practitioner or new employee. Indeed, a skillful and professional mentor guides a new principal or new administrator to become a capable and confident professional (Darling-Hammond, et al., 2007). One supplementary advantage of mentoring is the professional education practiced by the mentor as part of the cooperative process with the new principal or school administrator (Browne-Ferrigno & Muth, 2004). The researchers have identified that the mentorship will be able to enhance the professional capabilities of both the mentor and mentee.

Professional learning communities

Professional learning community (PLC) is one of the recognized styles to involving with colleagues that can be used for the professional development of the employees of the organization/s. One national organization can be devoted to the professional development of the industry. The professional learning community will help to learn further, professional development, and it will help individuals to improve their knowledge, skills, and also teaching and learning for entire systems improves.

Generally, professional learning communities are established with a shared aim, focus, and commitment to participant education, and welcome all participants who share the collective mission. The PLC develops a vision for the organization, prospects for group members, and outcome-based goals for the development of the members. One of the key attributes of the PLC is the on-going, job-embedded education of all PLC members (DuFour, DuFour, Eaker, & Many, 2006). In support of the professional development of educational administrators, "A corollary assumption is that if the organization is to become effective in helping all students learn, the adults in the organization must also be continually learning" (DuFour, et al., 2006, p. 3). According to Barth (1985), "The most powerful form of learning, the most sophisticated form of staff development, comes not from listening to the good words of others but from sharing what we know with others" (p. 93).

Coaching

As same as the mentorship, a coaching model couples a beginner principal or school administrator with a much experienced, skillful, and conversant school administrator in a professional affiliation. The concept of coaching is "distinct from traditional mentoring in that it typically takes place within a shorter time frame and focuses on the development of specific skills" (Grissom & Harrington, 2010: 7). Coaching will happen between a school administrator or a principal and a supervisor. There are some instances that in certain situations, there may not be a staff member or a suitable colleague to give information and advice to a newly recruited principal or a school administrator. In that situation, a supervisor provides support in the coaching capacity (Aseltine, et al., 2006).

Grissom & Harrington (2010) stressed that mentorship-style models like coaching are much efficient and effective since they integrate many of the suggested features of effective professional development through an on-going professional association in which faith and communication are appreciated.

Cohort groups
Another effective practice in principal, school administrator professional development is the creation of cohort groups. Usually, a cohort group will comprise a mixture of newly joined principals, school administrators, and experienced, knowledgeable school administrators who involve in the discussion, decision making, problem-solving, and reflection. This socially cohesive structure privileges many benefits, including "enhanced feelings of group affiliation and acceptance, social and emotional support, motivation, persistence, group learning, and mutual assistance" (Darling-Hammond, et al., 2007: 10). The cohorts allow principals, school administrators to meet with a common group of peers during a time to observe, investigate, study and analyze classroom practices, school administration process, teaching, and learning process and participate in professional readings and discussion, and visit one another in their daily working environments (Darling-Hammond, et. al., 2007; Evans & Mohr, 2014).

In-service training for serving principals and school leaders
In-service training can be seen as a compulsory requirement for principals and education officers in many countries. Training providers usually include universities, various government-funded principals' training institutes. In many countries, principal training has shifted from government administration to professional training organizations, universities, or training organizations specifically established for this purpose. Principals' organizations also play a significant role in the planning and implementation of training. In-service training is compulsory in Scotland, New York City, California, St. Petersburg, Shanghai, and South Korea. In France, principals are entitled to participate in in-service training every year (Caldwell et. al., 2003; Finnish National Board of Education, 2012).

It can be seen that the School-Based Intermediate Supervisors Institute (SBISI) in New York City, provides a two-year leadership seminar series to build school leadership skills and knowledge for their school principals. The program covers four summer workshops and three workshops per year, also, they have an opportunity for personal mentoring.

The Australian State of Victoria usually, conduct several training programs for school leaders. One of them is the High Performing Principals program which leads to develops principals' competencies from the perspective of system leadership, it is enabling them to promote a culture of collaboration, sharing best practices, and continuous learning in their communities. This training program is available to all the principals who are interested in system leadership.

Sweden is implementing a four-year in-service training program called 'Boost for Headteachers'. This program is provided by the Swedish National Agency for Education under the supervision of the Government of Sweden. This program is followed by all principals except those who are newly appointed since they are entitled to participate in another program specifically designed for those principals (Hale & Moorman, 2003; Hall, 2008; Finnish National Board of Education, 2012).

Education leadership directly affects the future education of a country. Therefore, it is imperative to see the real situation of training and development or the professional development of education leaders (SLEAS officers) in Sri Lanka. However, it is understood that there are no sufficient studies have been carried out in this area of study. So, it was realized during this relevant literature review, there is no rich research, empirical findings, or scholarly valued information in this study area yet.   Finland has a well-planned education structure and school management systems. In Finland, the functions, duties, and responsibilities of school leaders and principals were

changed dramatically for the last couple of years. They are not only financial managers, instructional leaders, entrepreneurs, HR managers (Aho et al., 2006).

Methodology

Methodology deals with reviewing the literature on professional development programs for school leaders covering major areas such as pre-service training, in-service training programs, mentoring, models of school leaders, coaching, history of education in Sri Lanka, and the background information of Education Administrative Service in Sri Lanka. Literature in recognized international journals on education and found in the Sri Lankan context is used for the study. Basic review and interpretations are made to showcase how professional development training programs for education leaders are conducted, what learning contents are there in such programs, who conducts those programs, the evolution of professional development programs, and the relationship between such training and development and school performances.

Findings

Literature finds that the need for training and professional development in the world and Sri Lanka dates back to several centuries. Even though some evidence was found in Sri Lankan history on the professional development of education leaders even before the time when the Portuguese conquered Sri Lanka, contents, and scopes of such programs were not found. This could be due to the reason that the Buddhist temples based education system prevailed in Sri Lanka must have followed its methods and practices either documented in different modes or destruction of documentary evidence.

It is seen how the influence of imperialists has made in Sri Lankan education and professional development programs as well. The need had been identified by them as it was a practice in those countries. The most formal systematic approaches for professional development and training were seen during the British ruing when compared to Portuguese and Dutch.

Taking the same path, Sri Lanka continued to implement training and development for education leaders even after the independence, and the contents and scopes of training programs were not that much different even now.

As such training and development programs have been implemented as they were being practiced by the systems, it was found that authorities had not paid much attention to the effectiveness of the raining and development. What mattered was the conduct of training as it complied with the requirement.

At present, school leaders undergo some or other training programs, and those leaders improve their capacities and competencies at different levels. Some evidence is found that those who are good at leadership skills and competencies produce better results in terms of both students' performances and school management.

It was found that the use of technology in such training and development programs were trivial even school leaders are exposed to technology. Discrepancies and inconsistencies about the both scope and contents of training and development programs are also seen in the Sri Lankan context at present thus highlighting the need for more sophisticated, comprehensive, and sustainable training for school leaders for better performance.

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